



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Aging and Adult Services

2101 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-2101

Courier 56-20-02 Phone 919-733-3818 Fax 919-715-0023

Michael F. Easley, Governor
Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

Karen E. Gottovi, Director
(919) 733-3983

September 9, 2005

Dear County Director of Social Services:

Subject: Special Assistance In-Home Program Expansion

The Division of Aging and Adult Services announces a Request for Proposals to participate in the Special Assistance In-Home Program. If you are interested in participating in this program, please complete the attached Response for Proposal form and return it no later than the close of business on **October 14, 2005**.

If your county is currently participating in the SA In-Home Program, you do not need to submit a Response for Proposal form to continue your participation. However, if you wish to request additional slots please complete the attached Request for Additional SA In-Home Program Slots and return it no later than the close of business on **October 14, 2005**.

BACKGROUND

The General Assembly in 1999 authorized the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct a demonstration project in which State/County Special Assistance for Adults funds can be used for payments to eligible individuals in in-home living arrangements. The SA In-Home Program provides an alternative to adult care home placement when an assessment indicates the individual can remain at home safely with appropriate services and the individual chooses to stay at home rather than enter an adult care home.

The SA In-Home Program originally allowed payments for up to 400 individuals. In 2000, county departments of social services were offered the option to participate. Twenty-two counties submitted proposals and were selected to participate. The 2003 General Assembly authorized continuation of the program through June 30, 2005 with an expansion to 800 slots statewide. As a result, 63 counties currently participate in the program. A listing of participating counties is attached.

The 2005 General Assembly has authorized a continuation of the program through June 30, 2007 with an expansion to 1,000 slots statewide. The legislation also changed the maximum payment amount from 50% of the 2002 SA/Adult Care Home (SA/ACH) maintenance amount of \$1,127 to 75% of the current SA/ACH maintenance amount. Beginning October 1, 2005 the SA/ACH maintenance amount increases to \$1,164 (\$1,118 ACH Rate + \$46 personal needs allowance = \$1,164).

If you would like more information on the SA In-Home Program, the "Special Assistance In-Home Program (Final Report, February 2005)" to the General Assembly" is available on the DHHS Long Term Care website at <http://www.dhhs.state.nc.us/ltc/ltcpub.htm>. This report provides data on the characteristics of the individuals receiving assistance, such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, living arrangements, caregiver availability, and service needs. The report also describes how case management is provided and a cost analysis of providing SA payments to eligible individuals at home versus an adult care home.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATING IN THE SA IN-HOME PROGRAM

Client Eligibility

1. Medicaid eligible individuals with incomes at or below 100% of the federal poverty level, and who meet all other eligibility criteria for Special Assistance, are financially eligible for Special Assistance payments in in-home living arrangements. The current federal poverty level (FPL) is \$798 and increases each year in April.

This income level (need standard) is lower than the income level for individuals receiving Special Assistance in adult care homes. The current SA income level for individuals in adult care homes, effective October 1, 2005, is close to 150% of the FPL. The General Assembly set the income level for the SA In-Home Program at 100% FPL to keep it consistent with the Medicaid income level for private living arrangements. Individuals with total countable monthly income between \$798 and \$1,163.50 are not eligible for the SA In-Home payment but may be eligible for payment in an adult care home.

2. The minimum payment in the SA In-Home Program is \$5.00.
3. Applicants must have a current FL-2, signed by a physician, indicating adult care home level of care.
4. Current policies and procedures for age, disability, citizenship, residence, resources, income, changes in situation, notices and appeals and fraud apply to SA In-Home applicants and recipients unless the SA In-Home policies and procedures indicate otherwise. The primary difference between policies for the

SA In-Home Program and for SA in an adult care home is the lower income limit and the determination of the payment amount.

5. When an individual applies for Special Assistance, the caseworker will discuss the in-home option with him and, if he is interested, refer him to the Adult Services case manager for assessment. The case manager will conduct a face-to-face assessment at the applicant's home, using the Resident Assessment Instrument-Home Care (RAI-HC) assessment tool. The assessment must indicate that the individual can live at home safely with appropriate care and services. Based on the outcome of the assessment, the case manager will authorize or deny the SA In-Home payment with the SA caseworker.
6. Counties that participate in the SA In-Home Program will use their existing Special Assistance budgets to make payments to eligible individuals who are in need of placement in an adult care home, but who choose to remain at home when an assessment shows they can do so safely with appropriate services. The program will not add any cost to the Special Assistance program. There are costs savings because the SA payment for in-home services is less than the SA payment for care in an adult care home. According to the data gathered from the current SA In-Home Program, between September 2000 and January 2005 the average monthly SA payment for in-home services was \$255 and the average monthly SA payment for adult care home was \$431.

Case Management

County departments that participate in the SA In-Home Program must provide case management for eligible individuals who receive SA at home. Medicaid At-Risk Case Management and/or SSBG can be used to provide the required case management.

The RAI-HC will be used by the DSS Adult Services staff to assess SA applicants who need placement in an adult care home but who prefer to continue living at home. The RAI-HC software will be provided to the counties participating in the SA In-Home Program and training will be provided on use of the tool. The case manager authorizes or denies approvals for SA In-Home payments, based on the assessment.

Two laptop computers were issued to each county DSS in 2000. They may be used for the SA In-Home Program or you may use another laptop that meets the specifications for running the RAI-HC assessment software. Because the RAI-HC software was designed to be used on a laptop computer that can be taken to the client's home, the original specifications for the software do not allow the laptop to be run from a network. The required specifications for operating the SA In-Home assessment software may be obtained by contacting Geoff Santoliquido, SA Program Administrator, at 919-733-3818.

The case manager will use the following guidelines for working with recipients and their families.

1. The SA payment to individuals living at home is a supplement to their income in the form of a cash payment (just as it is a supplement to individuals entering adult care homes). The payment is intended to help the individual continue living at home and can be used for items or expenses related to achieving this goal. It can be used to cover items or expenses such as food, shelter, home repairs, minor home modifications (such as ramps, rails, grab bars), clothing, utilities, medical expenses and transportation not covered by Medicaid, and other daily necessities. The case manager authorizes specific items or expenses for which the SA In-Home payment can be used and monitors use of the payments.
2. The SA payment to individuals living in in-home living arrangements can be made to individuals living in the following types of residences: privately owned or rented home; apartment; congregate housing; multi-unit housing with services; public or subsidized housing; shared group residence; home-sharing arrangement.
3. Elderly & disabled adults with income at or below 100% FPL who meet other criteria are eligible for Medicaid. They are eligible for and can receive Medicaid funded services, such as Personal Care Services and At-Risk Case Management Services, which allow them to stay at home when they choose this and can do so safely. (Likewise, when Medicaid recipients live in adult care homes, Medicaid pays the facility for Personal Care Services, including Enhanced Personal Care Services, for medical transportation, and for other Medicaid-funded services.) Funding sources other than Medicaid can be used to provide the in-home services that are needed by SA recipients living at home, such as In-Home Aide Services, Adult Day Care, Transportation Services, Housing and Home Improvement, etc. These funding sources include SSBG, State In-Home Services Fund, State Adult Day Care Fund, and Home and Community Care Block Grant funds.
4. Individuals qualifying for SA at home will have a choice of continuing to live at home or moving to an adult care home. Current SA recipients residing in adult care homes are also eligible for the in-home payment if they choose to return to a private living arrangement and can do so safely.
5. Reports, as needed, will be sent by county DSSs participating in the SA In-Home Program to the Division of Aging and Adult Services.

Training

The Division will provide required training for all counties added to the SA In-Home Program. Those counties currently participating in the program where staff turnover has occurred or refresher information is needed may elect to attend the

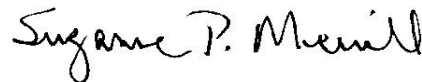
training. There will be a day long introductory training in Raleigh or at a regional location for all staff working with the SA In-Home Program, including SA eligibility case workers, social work case managers and supervisors. There will also be an additional day long training for the case managers in the use of the RAI-HC assessment tool. It is essential that staff attend these training sessions.

CONCLUSION

This is an important program with the potential to provide a choice of living arrangements for elderly and disabled adults. We look forward to hearing from county DSSs interested in participating in the SA In-Home Program. An SA In-Home policy and case management manual will be issued to counties that participate in the program. You may access it now at our on-line manuals web site (<http://info.dhhs.state.nc.us/olm/manuals/doa/>). Ongoing training and consultation will be available to the participating DSSs.

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Geoff Santoliquido, Special Assistance Program Administrator, or your Adult Programs Representative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne P. Merrill". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suzanne P. Merrill, Chief
Adult Services Section

Attachments

AFS-18-2005

SA/In-Home Program Participating Counties (63)

SA In-Home Program Counties			
Alamance	Cumberland ¹	Lee	Rockingham
Ashe	Currituck ¹	Lenoir	Rowan ¹
Avery	Dare ¹	Lincoln ¹	Rutherford
Beaufort	Davidson	Martin	Sampson
Bertie	Durham	Mecklenburg ¹	Scotland
Bladen	Forsyth	Moore	Stokes
Buncombe	Franklin	New Hanover	Surry
Cabarrus ¹	Gaston	Northampton ¹	Swain
Caldwell	Graham ¹	Onslow ¹	Transylvania
Camden	Guilford ¹	Orange	Union
Caswell	Harnett ¹	Pamlico ¹	Wake
Catawba	Haywood	Pasquotank ¹	Warren
Chatham ¹	Henderson	Pender	Watauga
Cleveland ¹	Hertford	Pitt ¹	Wayne
Columbus ¹	Iredell ¹	Randolph	Wilson
Craven ¹	Johnston ¹	Robeson ¹	

¹ Original 22 participating counties

**RESPONSE TO PROPOSAL
FOR
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE (SA) IN-HOME PROGRAM**

NOTE: Form may be reproduced on your computer.

_____ County Department of Social Services requests to participate in the SA In-Home Program and will follow the policies and procedures developed by the Division of Aging and Adult Services for the participating counties. As County DSS Director, I, _____, authorize the agency to participate in the SA In-Home Program.

I designate the following individual as the agency contact for this project:

Name: _____
Telephone: _____
E-mail address, if available: _____

Please respond to each of the following questions.

1. Why does your agency want to participate in this program?
2. What is the maximum caseload of SA/In-Home recipients your agency can manage? *In answering this question please consider there are 200 new available slots for the program. They will be distributed equitably among the counties based on the number of counties participating, geographic representation, and agency size.*
3. Who will conduct the assessments using the RAI-HC tool and provide the case management to the individuals receiving SA at home? If you don't know a specific person, please state the unit or position to which this project will be assigned.
4. How will you assure that the appropriate Adult Services, SA, and Adult Medicaid staff will work together to implement this program while maintaining current operations for these programs?
5. Does the case management staff that you have designated for this program have basic computer experience and access to a laptop computer and the internet? Describe.
6. How many of your staff will need training? Will your staff be able to attend a required training session in Raleigh or will a regional location better accommodate your agency?

Send your responses to: Geoff Santoliquido, Special Assistance Program Administrator
Adult Services Section
NC Division of Aging and Adult Services
2101 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2101

**REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL SLOTS
FOR COUNTY DSS PARTICIPATING IN THE
SPECIAL ASSISTANCE (SA) IN-HOME PROGRAM**

NOTE: Form may be reproduced on your computer.

_____ County Department of Social Services requests _____ slots in the SA In-Home Program in addition to the _____ slots already allocated to this county and will follow the policies and procedures developed by the Division of Aging and Adult Services for the participating counties. As County DSS Director, I, _____, authorize the agency to increase the number of slots available and continue participation in the SA In-Home Program.

I designate the following individual as the agency contact for this project:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address, if available: _____

Please respond to each of the following questions.

1. Why is your agency requesting additional slots? Has your agency fully utilized its current slot allocation and, if so, for how many months? If your agency has not fully utilized its current slot allocation but additional slots are requested, explain how additional slots would make a difference.
2. What is the maximum caseload of SA/In-Home recipients your agency can manage? *In answering this question please consider there are 200 new available slots for the program. They will be distributed equitably among the counties based on the number of new counties requesting to participate, geographic representation, and agency size.*
3. Will the same staff continue conducting the assessments using the RAI-HC tool and provide the case management to the increased number of recipients, or will additional staff be assigned? If you are adding staff, who will that be? Will they have basic computer experience and access to a laptop computer and the internet? (If you don't know a specific person, please state the unit or position to which this project will be assigned.)
4. How many of your staff will need training? Will your staff be able to attend a training session in Raleigh or will a regional location better accommodate your agency?

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